



NEWS RELEASE

Commander, Task Force 70
Public Affairs Office
FPO AP 96634-2770

E-mail: pao@kitty-hawk.navy.mil
Web: www.kittyhawk.navy.mil



For Immediate Release

Feb. 2, 2007



Wren relieves McClain as strike group commander

YOKOSUKA, Japan – Rear Adm. Richard B. Wren assumed command of the USS Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Group, Task Force 70, Task Force 75 and Carrier Strike Group 5 from Rear Adm. Douglas L. McClain during a change of command ceremony aboard the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) Feb. 2 at 10 a.m.

Adm. Timothy J. Keating, commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command, was the guest speaker.

Keating spoke to the hundreds of Japanese and American guests about the importance of the two nations' regional security efforts.

“The challenges we face today are different than we overcame in the 60s, 70s and 80s,” said Keating. “But now more than ever the strength of the alliance between the United States and Japan is of critical importance.”

Keating served as the Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Group commander between June 1998 and September 2000.

Key to this alliance is the service rendered by the U.S. Seventh Fleet and ships of the Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Group.

Although the strike group’s centerpiece -- USS Kitty Hawk -- is the Navy’s oldest ship, other strike group ships are equipped with some of the Navy’s newest technology, such as ballistic missile defense-capable Aegis cruisers and destroyers.

McClain, who assumed command of the strike group on July 22, 2005, thanked people from both nations for his successful tour as commander.

“In order for me to succeed, it takes almost 10,000 U.S. Sailors, it takes an amazing Japanese Navy, it takes tremendous support from all the entities of the Government of Japan, from the Government of the United States, from all the different people that support this mission of defending this area and defending the United States,” he said.

McClain also thanked those in attendance for their support of USS Kitty Hawk’s replacement, USS George Washington (CVN 73), which is expected to arrive in Yokosuka next year.

“As many of you have worked to lay the groundwork for the arrival of the USS George Washington, I want to thank you all for what you have done,” he said. “When you see the mighty George Washington arrive sometime next year, you will marvel at the capability that that ship has.”

McClain then welcomed Wren, who reports from his assignment as Director, Aviation and Aircraft Carrier Plans and Requirements Branch on the Chief of Naval Operations Staff in the Pentagon.

Wren said he is happy to be back in Japan.

“It was 1975 when Midshipmen Wren first came to Yokosuka,” he said. “It took me 20 years to get back to (Japan, at Naval Air Facility) Atsugi, but Diane and I were blessed with three wonderful years here in the 1990s.”

He served as the commanding officer of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 115 at Atsugi between January 1995 and late 1996.

“I knew ... I must return to Japan; so this is a thrilling day for Diane and I to be here standing in this magnificent hangar bay on USS Kitty Hawk,” he said during his remarks. “For our Japanese guests, your presence speaks volumes about the importance of the Japan-U.S. alliance.

“This is a partnership anchored by our commitment to regional stability and buoyed by both the tremendous support it provides our hosts and the enduring bonds of friendship we build every day,” said Wren.

The Kitty Hawk Carrier Strike Group is the largest carrier strike group in the Navy.

It includes the Kitty Hawk, the aircraft squadrons and staff of Carrier Air Wing 5, the guided-missile cruisers USS Shiloh (CG 67) and USS Cowpens (CG 63); guided-missile destroyers USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54), USS John S. McCain (DDG 56), USS Fitzgerald (DDG 62), USS Lassen (DDG 82), USS Mustin (DDG 89) and USS Stethem (DDG 63); USS Gary (FFG 51); and Destroyer Squadron 15 staff.

The group’s ships and destroyer squadron staff operate from Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan, and the air wing staff and squadrons operate from Atsugi.